



THE NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Reviewing Stand

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What Do Our Teen-Agers Think Of America's Future?

A radio discussion over WGN and the Mutual Broadcasting System
in cooperation with the National High School Institute in Speech,
Northwestern University

GRANT CROSS

Amarillo High School, Amarillo, Texas

SUSAN DEMBY

New Rochelle High School, New Rochelle, New York

SHIRLEY FERGUSON

Columbia City High School, Columbia City, Indiana

CHANDLER MEYERS

John Marshall High School, Los Angeles, California

Moderator: ROBERT BUCHANAN

Director, The Reviewing Stand

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THE REVIEWING STAND is a weekly radio forum presented by Northwestern University. The program was first broadcast by Station WGN, Chicago, October 14, 1934. It has been on the air continuously since that time, originating in the WGN studios, and, since 1935, carried by the stations of the Mutual Broadcasting System. **THE REVIEWING STAND** presents members of the Northwestern University faculty and distinguished guests from business, government, education, and the press in round table discussions of contemporary problems—the questions that are in the news. The program is under the direction of James H. McBurney, Dean of the School of Speech, Northwestern University; Miss Myrtle Stahl, Director of Educational Programs, WGN, Chicago; R. E. Buchanan, Public Relations Director of Radio, Northwestern University.

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What Do Our Teen-Agers Think Of America's Future?

MR. BUCHANAN: What do you teen-agers think of America's future?

GRANT CROSS: America's future depends upon developing successful relations with other countries and by not giving in to any one country.

SHIRLEY FERGUSON: That may be right, but the future of America is bleak and dismal. Unless we do something soon, we are headed for another world war.

SUSAN DEMBY: I believe the future of America depends upon our patience. Discussion and not military force should be used to obtain peace. It is important enough to try for over and over again.

CHANDLER MEYERS: But no matter how much we try, the real success of America's future depends upon her ability to avoid the influence of socialism that has enveloped many European nations.

* * * *

MR. BUCHANAN: Last year, just about this time, the *Reviewing Stand* departed from its usual presentation of mature leaders in government, law, labor, business, and education to ask four teen-agers what they thought of America's problems.

Listeners Disagree

That program aroused our listeners in great response. "Inspiring," said one lady from Michigan. "A sad lack of perspective," complained a veteran in California. A letter from Massachusetts called the young people "alert, wise, and thoughtful"; while a postcard from Texas pointed out that these four students "couldn't see beyond their noses."

Whatever the comment, however, the *Reviewing Stand* feels that the opinions of American youth should be

heard, for these young people will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Today, we welcome four high school students who are now attending the National High School Institute in Speech at Northwestern University.

Now, Grant, you seem to be much concerned about our foreign relations. Do you think that we are making progress in our relations with other countries?

GRANT: Yes, I believe we are definitely making progress. Our government finally seems to realize that we must cooperate and that we must help other nations onto their feet before our government and our country can have any kind of future at all.

'Avoid Wishy-Washy'

And I think that we should not adopt any wishy-washy policy, giving in to anyone who comes along—such as Russia, specifically—but that we have to stand up for what we believe is right. If we do, we can have a better country and a better world.

MR. BUCHANAN: I think you have some hope for the future, Grant, while you, Shirley, seem anything but optimistic. Just why do you think our future is so "bleak and dismal," as you say?

SHIRLEY: As Grant pointed out, we are having trouble with Russia at the present time, and I think that trouble is very great. We have this Atlantic Pact which we may hope will bring about some peace, but I think it is really a step toward another war. No matter what little country belongs to this pact, if it gets into trouble with Russia or any other country, then the United States almost *has* to go to war. Therefore, you can see that we are going toward this third world

war which we want to avoid. With our foreign relations the way they are today, I don't see how anything except a third world war can evolve.

MR. BUCHANAN: Sue, you seem to follow the advice, "If you don't succeed at first, try, try again." Do you think that advice is going to work and avert these things that Shirley is talking about?

SUSAN: Yes, I do, because I think the magazines and newspapers have pointed out how very fatal a third world war would be. I think that fear alone, perhaps, will scare the American people into working toward peaceful means of settling our problems.

MR. BUCHANAN: The advent of socialism is somewhat different from foreign relations, but it seems to be your major worry, Chandler. Do you think the United States is on the brink of socialism?

'On Brink of Socialism'

CHANDLER: I believe the United States has been on the brink of socialism for the last 17 years and more so during the last few years. Still, I hope that we will have a few people in this country who will wake up to the fact that socialism is *not* the answer to our problems.

MR. BUCHANAN: We have brought up many problems. I would like to know the answers.

Let's start this way. Let's first talk about conditions in our country. For instance, let me ask you for your general political views. If you had voted last fall, Sue, to whom would you have given your ballot?

SUSAN: Last fall I would have given it to Henry Wallace.

MR. BUCHANAN: You place emphasis on "last fall." Would that not be true today?

SUSAN: Well, no, it wouldn't. I am not quite sure whom I would vote for today, but I think, perhaps, Henry Wallace is too extreme about giving

up arms. We have to maintain some force. But I think that in his views on labor he would have been very wonderful. And the other men who were running at the time all seemed so hopeless that Henry Wallace seemed the best—if not perfect.

MR. BUCHANAN: Would anyone disagree with the view that Truman and Dewey are "hopeless"?

Democrats or Socialists

SHIRLEY: I definitely disagree with Sue. I think Harry S. Truman was by far the best man we could have put in. And I think the majority of the American people agrees with me, because he was elected president. Chandler calls us Democrats more-or-less socialists. I don't think a program is socialistic just because it is best for the country. Others have called us socialists for years and years and still do now that Truman is President. Nevertheless, whether you want to call it socialism or anything else, as long as it is best for the country, then what difference does it make?

CHANDLER: I don't care what you want to call it, but my personal belief and contention is that socialism is not the best thing for the country. During the depression it didn't do any good. It really took the war to bring us out of the depression, and our economy has been bungled ever since the New Deal got into power.

I believe the Administration has two inherent evils. The first of these is that it gives undesirable and unnecessary government control. We have prided ourselves in this country on our freedom, and we have grown great by the fact that the individual takes his own initiative. He doesn't depend upon the government to look after him. We are taking a dangerous step toward unnecessary government control.

This leads to the second evil, for step by step we are headed toward socialism, and, if we go farther than socialism, it could run into Communism by a very slow process.

MR. BUCHANAN: What would be your political leaning, then, Chandler, with these views?

CHANDLER: My political leaning would be definitely toward the Republican Party. It is not so much toward what the Republican Party advocates as it is what it wishes to keep out of this country.

What Do We Want?

GRANT: I am definitely for Truman, and I would like to draw sharp issue with Chandler on the idea of socialism. I think he is selling our American people short. Our American people are a wonderful people, and they have some ideas of their own. If they don't want socialism, they are the people to avoid it. Democracy is the ability to change. If the people want to try socialism a while, let them try it. If they don't like it, they can change back. That is the basis of our American policy, and we have to maintain it.

SHIRLEY: I agree with Grant. If that is what the American people want, let them have it. The idea of democracy is that each man has his own opinion. Today we are regulating too many opinions. The government, of course, has to step in where the people can't get along.

MR. BUCHANAN: Grant, you say we should let the people have what they want. Would that hold true in your section of the country, in Texas, about Truman's civil rights program?

GRANT: Truman's civil rights is a very controversial problem in Texas. I don't believe his civil rights program would *ever* work. It is like a big building. Instead of starting with the foundation, first you put the marble finish on the building and then you work inward. Everyone knows that isn't going to work. We can't start on the top level and work down; we have to work as you would on a skyscraper here in Chicago. You start way down below the ground and start building up; finally you have a beau-

tiful building. That's the way we must handle our racial problem.

I say the first step is to work toward equal education rights. From there the Negroes could make their own way.

SUSAN: Don't you think that we have had the emancipation of the slaves for a long enough time? Haven't we improved that way? The North has accepted racial equality for a long time, and I think that's a big enough foundation on which to build.

To hang a person on a tree for nothing at all—just the color of his skin—isn't that something to require a law?

GRANT: I am definitely against any lynching, as you are, Sue. But I don't think Truman's civil rights program is the answer to the basic problem.

Lynching is the outburst of these inner emotions which have been built up. And I agree with you it has been a long time since we freed the slaves, but you will agree also that this problem was a long time in coming into focus and we can't get rid of it in a few years. I am definitely against lynching, Sue, but I think our present laws cover that well enough.

CHANDLER: Sue, I believe that we cannot write a law into the actual customs of the people. Now, the Southern white people are unalterably opposed to the civil rights bill as it is proposed. Even if it were enacted, I do not believe it would be very effective. You have to have, as Grant says, the basic foundations before we can enact a law. A law is the last step.

'Outlaw Discrimination'

SUSAN: But, if you go by that policy, we will continue these unfair practices for many years. The people aren't going to come to it by themselves. They have to realize that discrimination is a dirty practice and that it will have to be outlawed.

MR. BUCHANAN: A "dirty practice" from the standpoint of labor is the

Taft-Hartley Act. I believe you mentioned the act, Shirley. What do you think should be done in that regard?

SHIRLEY: I think the Taft-Hartley Act is a fine thing, and I think it should definitely be kept, although they are trying to repeal it in Congress right now.

In the first place, what right has a man at the head of a union—a few hundred men—to call a coal strike and jeopardize the whole nation's economy because his workers want a few more cents pay?

Is T-H Law Fair?

GRANT: Shirley, I again would like to draw sharp issues here. I think the Taft-Hartley law has some good points, but it was drawn up in a national emergency and is very poorly written. We should wipe it out and rewrite it.

And so far as the union labor bosses are concerned, I think the unions will take care of that problem without any help from the government. And that is the way it should be.

SHIRLEY: Grant, I think it is about time it was being done! If the unions are going to take care of the bosses, it is about time they did something about it!

GRANT: I would like to call attention to the United Auto Workers. You recall that directly after the war that union had Communist control and had quite a few strikes. It cleaned out its own ranks and did a very good job of it. That's just one step in a long line of steps which are going to be taken.

MR. BUCHANAN: Sue, you brought up Wallace's general program with regard to labor and said you were much in favor of it. What are your views, then, on this Taft-Hartley Act?

SUSAN: I can't disagree with the whole Taft-Hartley law, but there are certain things that I don't think are too fair to labor. And I think that some revision should be made, such as in provisions for picketing. Picketing is just a manifestation of freedom of

speech. Yet in the Taft-Hartley law mass picketing is outlawed.

MR. BUCHANAN: What if this picketing interferes with other men getting to work? Is that a manifestation of the rights of free speech?

SUSAN: No. You must draw limits, of course.

MR. BUCHANAN: What about the closed shop? I think we might draw issue there. Would you favor or oppose the closed shop, Sue?

SUSAN: I think that, if the closed shop comes about through the vote of all the employees, it is perfectly fair and should not be outlawed.

SHIRLEY: That's right, Sue, *if* it is brought about by the vote of all the employees, but I think it should definitely be done that way—not just have a few people decide how it is going to be done.

CHANDLER: I don't believe we have too many controversial issues in discussion of the Taft-Hartley law. There are certain provisions in it that should be changed, but on the whole, I would like to point out, it is a definite improvement over the Wagner Act.

GRANT: As I stressed before, we shouldn't be satisfied with a stop-gap measure. Let's write something we can really be proud of and something that will definitely solve our labor problems.

MR. BUCHANAN: This question of socialism has come up. The government medical care has often been called "socialized medicine." Do you fear it as a form of socialism, then, Chandler?

'Private Medicine Enough'

CHANDLER: Yes, I certainly do. In the first place I believe we have enough private medical plans to take care of people who don't have the money. I mean the perfectly good private medical plans, such as Blue Cross and many others.

SHIRLEY: All right, Chandler, but we aren't all so fortunate as to have facil-

ities available. We need adequate medical care.

I can cite several instances in my home town in which persons have had to go to the hospital. Those hospital bills have taken the life savings of many of the people, especially old people. Illness may send these persons to a poor house because they can't pay their medical bills.

CHANDLER: Here's the thing for people who can't afford to pay: We have various county hospitals that don't charge any money at all. We have enough charity right now to take care of those people.

GRANT: Chandler, isn't the county medical care a form of socialism since everyone is not out on his own trying to scrape up the money?

CHANDLER: It may, when expressed that way, seem to be a form of socialism, but under our free enterprise system we have enough to take care of such people. We don't need any additional government regulation and control.

GRANT: I would like to point out some interesting facts—at least they are to me. Only 25% of the American people have any form of medical insurance, and the *Wall Street Journal* last week reported that the ability to get this insurance has dropped as much as 25% in some places. That means 75% of all people in the United States don't have anything to fall back upon in case they are sick.

What Is Medicine Doing?

SUSAN: I know the voluntary health insurance that the AMA advocates includes no preventive medicine. In other words, they cure, but they have no research going on. The quality of their medicine hasn't improved, and right now the problem seems to be rising fees. Furthermore, their medicine doesn't go far enough.

CHANDLER: The thing we have to analyze in this "socialized medicine" business is whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Let's look at

some countries where they have "socialized medicine." In England the "socialized medicine" plan has become so regimented that a woman has to go to a doctor if she wants to get a girdle! [Laughter]

GRANT: I think we are getting off the issue. The government proposal is not "socialized medicine," but government health insurance. And there's a lot of difference between the two.

Under government health insurance you merely take out a form of insurance. They don't tell you what doctor to go to, what hospital you have to attend. It is just a form of protection; it's like social security.

Underdog and Opportunity

SHIRLEY: I certainly agree with Grant. It is a protection. It is what the American people need for that reason. For years many of us have floundered about, wondering what to do about hospital bills and how we could get a decent insurance plan. Now, with the government offering us such a plan, there is no reason why we shouldn't jump at the chance.

MR. BUCHANAN: I think this basic issue of the trend toward socialism or toward what the people want—both expressions being made here—is important. Chandler, do you really think government medical care is going to bring on socialism?

CHANDLER: Yes, I do. Grant pointed out that government medical care could be on a voluntary basis, such as is being proposed by the Administration now. It started out on a voluntary basis in Great Britain, but it soon spread so that it was compulsory. Once you initiate a little bit of socialism, you go on and on!

SUSAN: And what is wrong with socialism if the underdog gets a fair break? If he doesn't have big bosses above him who have so much riches, and he is starving?

CHANDLER: Everyone in this country has the same opportunity. Those people that have the ability and have the

initiative can go ahead. Those that don't have it usually don't go ahead.

SUSAN: But it is necessary to prohibit unfair practices which are being done every day in the United States!

GRANT: We like to talk about our freedom in America, but such freedom may be a myth. In fact, here in Chicago—looking at some of these places where people live—no matter what talents some have, no matter what intelligence, they still have terrific odds against them. We have to do something to help them. I think health insurance is just one step that should be adopted.

MR. BUCHANAN: What about the other 'isms? For instance Communism, especially with regard to foreign relations. I would like to know more about your dim view of the future, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: We are having so much trouble with Russia right now. I admit that things are a little bit better than they were, say, a few weeks ago. But I don't think we have come to the point where we are living together decently.

What About Russia?

We don't know what Russia is going to pull next. We have great military preparedness here in the United States and Russia has so many armed forces that she is preparing for war. We have formed the Atlantic Pact, which shows we are afraid. If we are not careful we will have another war. And, as Sue pointed out, if we have another war there may not be anything left of the world.

GRANT: Shirley, what would you propose?

SHIRLEY: I didn't come here with any set plan, or any ideal way to bring about better relations with other countries. Still, I think there is one way it can be done: Give the people, the individual people of the country, a better say than they have now.

CHANDLER: I believe, as one plan, the Atlantic Pact is a fine thing as far as

it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. What we should do is to form a federal union of the democratic nations as a first step toward world government.

SUSAN: I don't agree. I think that any of these pacts just divides the world. I think it is more important for us to spend every single effort in trying to agree with Russia, particularly.

GRANT: It is not the United States, particularly, that is dividing the world. You will notice that Russia not only has pacts, but she controls the governments of every one of the countries around here. She's not doing anything to help the situation!

SHIRLEY: I think the United States is a big enough country to step in and show Russia how it can be done. We are not even setting an example today.

GRANT: I definitely agree. I think, not only should we have pacts with the North Atlantic countries, but with all countries which want to enter to safeguard their own liberties.

Federal World Government?

SHIRLEY: I think a federal world government would be the ideal situation, and I think it could be set up.

CHANDLER: There is a great difference between a pact, which you people seem to have interpreted I was advocating, and a federal union. Under a pact each one of the nations has its individual sovereignty, but under a federal union all power goes to one government, one unified powerful force.

GRANT: Chandler, do you think even the democracies would consent to giving up their sovereignty and their freedom of choice?

CHANDLER: I know there are provisions in the French, Italian, and Swiss constitutions, and in many other European countries to form a federal world government.

SUSAN: I think that because of the different viewpoints of countries we are not ready for federal government, and I don't think the pacts are the answer. If we spend more effort in

enforcing the UN, perhaps that would be the answer.

CHANDLER: The trouble with the UN is that there is a latent veto. In other words, if the United Nations decides to take action against a certain aggressor nation, the one latent veto is the ability of that particular nation to refuse to do what the United Nations says it should do.

SHIRLEY: I agree with Chandler. If we are going to use the United Nations as a basis to bring about world peace, then I think we have to give it some power. What do they do for weeks and weeks in the UN? They discuss and talk about something, and finally—maybe—come to a conclusion. But then what happens to that conclusion? They have no power to enforce it, to make the countries try to bring about a more unified world.

Power and Peace

MR. BUCHANAN: Does the power that you are asking for, Shirley, fit your view? You decry the fact that the world is becoming an armed camp. Now you want to give power to a peaceful organization.

SHIRLEY: I want to use power only as a means of keeping this peace. For example, instead of having each country raising an army and sending its 18-year-olds off to train, I think each country should have a representative of some type of army in one big power, controlled by this major government.

GRANT: That is a very ideal situation, and it might come about 500 years from now. But we must have something to safeguard ourselves now. Russia certainly isn't going to take care of it for us.

SHIRLEY: Start federal world government now! I think if we started immediately we could make it come about soon, using the UN as a foundation.

CHANDLER: Have you ever tried to compromise the principles of a dictatorship and a democracy? It absolutely cannot be done. It couldn't be done under the Weimar constitution in

Germany. Therefore we have to start organizing with nations that think similarly. And I believe the federal union of *democracies* will keep peace in the world. It will have such an overbalance of power in the world that none of the other nations would dare to start a war.

SHIRLEY: All right, Chandler, you say, "This can't be done," and "That can't be done." That's the trouble with everyone. The only way to do it is to get in there and pitch. My mother always taught me there is no such word as can't. "You *can* do it. You had better outlaw that word, *can't*, in your vocabulary because you can really do anything you want to, if you set your mind to it."

CHANDLER: Don't get me wrong! I don't say it *can't* be done. I believe it very well *can* be done, but not now. We have to take a practical step towards world government.

SHIRLEY: That's what I mean. We have to get started now.

MR. BUCHANAN: We have discussed many things, both domestic and foreign. If you could pick any one of these and work toward it, what would you select and how do you think we might solve that problem?

What Is Most Important?

SHIRLEY: I would work on foreign policy. I think there is no use worrying ourselves to any great extent about our domestic problems if we are going to be blown off the face of the earth by Russia tomorrow.

GRANT: I agree. Our foreign policy is our big problem. We have to stand up to the world and say, "We believe in democracy; we are going to have it in our country. Any of you who wants to stand for democracy can stand with us, and we will be sure that you get a square deal."

SUSAN: I, too, believe our foreign policy is the greatest problem. Instead of stocking up on military might, we

should have more discussions, and—be it the UN or world government—it *has* to be done!

CHANDLER: I believe there are two very important issues. We must insure our democracy at home. We must realize the dangers that socialism can lead us into, because, secondly, we cannot advocate democracy abroad if we can't keep it at home.

MR. BUCHANAN: The opinions of you four are certainly divergent, but I think such a variety of views is as it should be.

With your different backgrounds, from widely separated communities, you four represent the many elements which make up our country.

Whether we agree with your beliefs or not seems unimportant to me. It is important, however, to find out that you young people are aware of the problems that you, as well as we, now face.

I hope that you keep studying, keep arguing, keep thinking and keep making known what you would like to do about America's future.

Suggested Readings

Compiled by Laura R. Joost, Assistant,
Reference Department, Deering
Library, Northwestern University



ADAMS, PHELPS *The Free Enterprise System*. New York, The National Association of Manufacturers, 1949. (free)

A reprint of an article in *The New York Sun* explaining what free enterprise is, how it works, and what it has done.

JOHNSEN, JULIA E. *Federal World Government*. New York, the H. W. Wilson Co., 1948. (The Reference Shelf, Vol. 20, No. 5)

Brings up to date the volume *United Nations or World Government*, presenting discussions for and against remaking the United Nations into a Federal World Government.

JOHNSEN, JULIA E., comp. *Should the Communist Party Be Outlawed?* New York, the H. W. Wilson Co., 1949. (The Reference Shelf, Vol. 20, No. 7)

Treats the question of the intrinsic nature of the Communist party and whether it should be permitted to penetrate further into American ideals and life.

PETERS, CLARENCE A., comp. *International Trade: Cooperative or Competitive?* New York, The H. W. Wilson Co., 1946. (The Reference Shelf, Vol. 19, No. 1)

Background material and discussion of international trade, looking forward to later agreements such as the International Trade Organization.

PETERS, CLARENCE A. *Free Medical Care*. New York, The H. W. Wilson Co., 1946. (The Reference Shelf, Vol. 19, No. 3)

An attempt to present the most effective viewpoints of the authorities writing on the problem of socialized medicine.

SUMMERS, ROBERT E., comp. *Federal Information Controls in Peacetime*. New York, The H. W. Wilson Co., 1949. (The Reference Shelf, Vol. 20, No. 6)

Presents the basic issues and various implications involved in federal information controls in peacetime. Places special emphasis on atomic energy

and military information controls and includes discussions on loyalty checks. United States. President's Committee on Civil Rights. *To Secure These Rights*. New York, Simon & Schuster, 1948.

Report by President's Committee on Civil Rights. Reviews cases of discrimination, segregation and denial of civil liberties.

Congressional Digest 28:182-41, June-July, '49. "Is the North Atlantic Pact a Sound Plan for U.S. Security?"

Pro and con discussion of the North Atlantic Pact.

Congressional Digest 28:101-28, April, '49. "Taft-Hartley Act: Should It Be Repealed? Revised? Bolstered?"

Background material on labor legislation, and a pro and con discussion of the Taft-Hartley Act.

Congressional Digest 27:260-88, Nov., '48. "Question of U.S. Approval for Pending Charter of International Trade Organization."

Background material and pro and con discussion.

Saturday Evening Post 221:22+, May 14, '49; 221:32+, May 21, '49; 221:29+, May 28, '49. "Do You Really Want Socialized Medicine?" S. M. SPENCER.

Many questions about socialized medicine in the U.S. are answered by the writer's experiences in England. Pro and con discussion.

Survey 85:88-94, Feb., '49. "Whatever the New Labor Laws . . ." BEULAH AMIDON.

Considerations to be taken into account if the new Wagner-Hartley-Taft-Truman-Lesinsky-Thomas bill is to work.

Vital Speeches 15:438-40, May 1, '49. "In Defense of American Foreign Policy." W. G. CARLETON.

Contents that in a choice between the Far East and Western Europe our American leaders have been wise to put the emphasis on aid to Western Europe. *Vital Speeches* 15:425-9, May 1, '49. "Major Problems in United States Foreign Policy." F. B. SAYRE.

Suggests that the major problems in U.S. foreign policy stem from the East-West conflict and gives several solutions to these problems.

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Is World Government Possible Now?

Vol. XII, No. 16

Should Our Government Provide Medical Care?

Vol. XII, No. 5

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| 8. Our Housing Problem—Rent Control. | 21. Why Vacations? |
| 9. Can We Make Adoptions Safe? | 22. Are You Looking for a Job—Or a Better Job? |
| 10. Should Yellow Oleomargarine Be Prohibited in Commerce? | 23. What Is Happening in China? |
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